

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action dated November 3, 2004, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 8 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Pfeiffer (U.S. Patent No. 5,629,925) in view of Yoshida (U.S. Patent No. 5,504,863). The Examiner further objected to Claims 2-7, 9-15 and 17-23 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

At the outset, applicants first amend the specification herein to substitute issued U.S. Patent Numbers for application numbers for applications co-pending at the time of the filing date of the present application.

Furthermore, Applicants herein amend each of independent Claims 2, 9 and 17 indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Specifically, respective Claims 1, 8 and 16 are being cancelled and the subject matter of each respective claim is incorporated in each of amended Claims 2, 9 and 17.

It is respectfully submitted that amended Claims 2, 9 and 17 now present patentable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner. Accordingly, Claims 3, 5, 10 and 18 are being amended to change their dependencies from canceled claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks herein, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance be issued. If the Examiner believes that a

telephone conference with the Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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